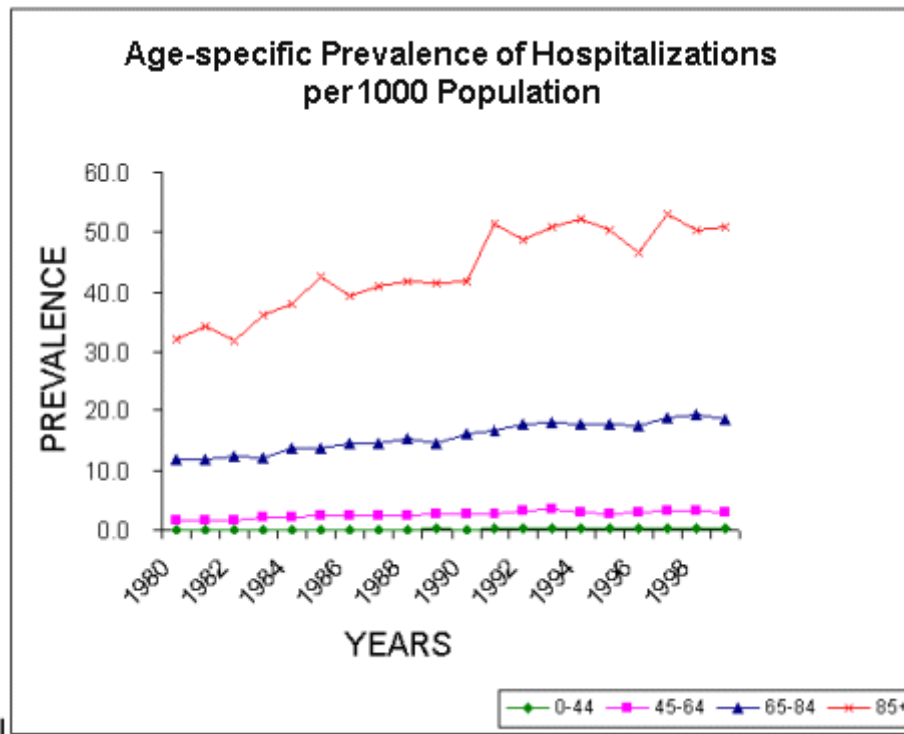




## Heart Failure Fact Sheet



### Trends in Hospitalizations for Heart Failure by Age Group, 1980–1999, United States



Source: Age-specific prevalence of hospitalizations per 1000 population/National Hospital Discharge survey.

### Facts on Heart Failure

The term heart failure is used to indicate the heart chambers are not beating optimally, and adequate amounts of blood and oxygen are not pumped efficiently to other body organs.

Around 5 million Americans have heart failure with around 550,000 new cases diagnosed each year.<sup>1</sup>

Heart failure accounts for around 266,400 deaths in Americans each year and is a significant contributor to disability.<sup>1</sup>

Hospital admissions associated with heart failure have continued to rise; hospital discharges rose from 377,000 in 1979 to 995,000 in 2001. Heart failure is the most common reason for hospitalization of Medicare beneficiaries.<sup>1,2</sup>

Hospitalizations for heart failure among Medicare enrollees are higher in black than white populations.<sup>3</sup>

The most common causes of heart failure are coronary artery disease, hypertension and diabetes. Heart Failure is preceded by hypertension in 91% of cases.<sup>1,4</sup>

Within 6 years of a heart attack, 22 percent of men and 46 percent of women will develop heart failure.<sup>1</sup>

Sudden cardiac death (cardiac arrest) occurs 6-9 times more frequently in individuals with heart failure than the general population.<sup>1</sup>

The mortality rate of a heart failure diagnosis within 5 years is greater than 50 percent. Approximately 80 percent of men and 70 percent of women diagnosed with heart failure under the age of 65 will die within 8 years.<sup>1</sup>

In the United States, the estimated direct and indirect costs associated with heart failure are around 25.8 billion.<sup>1</sup>

Common symptoms of heart failure are:

- Shortness of breath during mild activities or usual daily activities.
- Difficulty breathing when lying down.
- Weight gain with swelling in the legs, ankles, or lower back from fluid retention. Swelling can be mild or moderate.
- General fatigue and weakness.

Heart failure is a serious condition for which there is no current cure. Once diagnosed, medications are required for the rest of the person's life.

Quality of life of individuals with heart failure and a more normal life expectancy are enhanced with early diagnosis and use of newer, evidenced-based treatment. Treatment usually involves three to four medicines used in combination. Medicines used to treat HF include ACE inhibitors (ACE-I), diuretics, digoxin, and beta blockers.<sup>5,6</sup>

Individuals living with heart failure can improve their quality of life and outcomes by:

- Taking prescribed medications as recommended each day.
- Reducing their dietary intake of salt (sodium).
- Daily physical activity as recommended by their health provider.
- Being aware of and telling their health provider about their heart failure symptoms.
- Weighing daily to monitor fluid retention; communicating with their health provider if significant changes occur.
- Learning ways to deal with depression and stress and get treatment.
- Developing living wills to communicate their wishes for care to health providers and family members.<sup>4,7</sup>

### **CDC's Public Health Efforts**

CDC currently funds health departments in 32 states and the District of Columbia to develop effective strategies to reduce the burden of cardiovascular diseases and related risk factors with an overarching emphasis on heart healthy policies and physical and social environmental changes. Through these state programs, CDC aims to reduce disparities in treatment, risk factors, and disease; delay the onset of disease; postpone death from cardiovascular disease; and reduce disabling conditions. Efforts to prevent and control hypertension and coronary artery disease are key to the prevention of heart failure. For more information on CDC's Cardiovascular Health State Program, please visit our Web site at

[http://www.cdc.gov/cvh/state\\_program/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/cvh/state_program/index.htm)

## For More Information

For more information about congestive heart failure, visit the Web sites of the following organizations:

American Heart Association

<http://americanheart.org>\*

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>

Heart Failure Society of America

<http://www.hfsa.org>\*

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7. Grady KL, Dracup K, Kennedy G, Moser DK, Piano M, Stevenson LW, Young JB. Team Management of Patients with Heart Failure, Circulation 102 (19): 2443-2456.

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